THE MAGAZINE OF LEARNING, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICY

SESP

FALL 2026

SESP 100

Happy Birthday to Us!

Preparing leaders who've shaped people, schools, communities, and systems since 1926



PADDLING THROUGH

Photographer Walter Kitundu, an award-winning Tanzanian American multidisciplinary artist and educator, followed the *jiimaan* journey (see page 18) using a drone, allowing him to "shift perspectives and get images that provided both environmental context and intimate paddler-level views." In this photo, taken July 10, the group travels between two pierheads on Michigan's Pentwater River into Lake Michigan.

Northwestern
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY

Dean
Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy

Associate Dean
Coleen T. Coleman (Comm88, MS91)

Managing Editor
Julie Deardorff

Editorial and Design
Jeff Strayer, Henry McGill
Office of Global Marketing and Communications

Director, Marketing and Communications
David Brazy

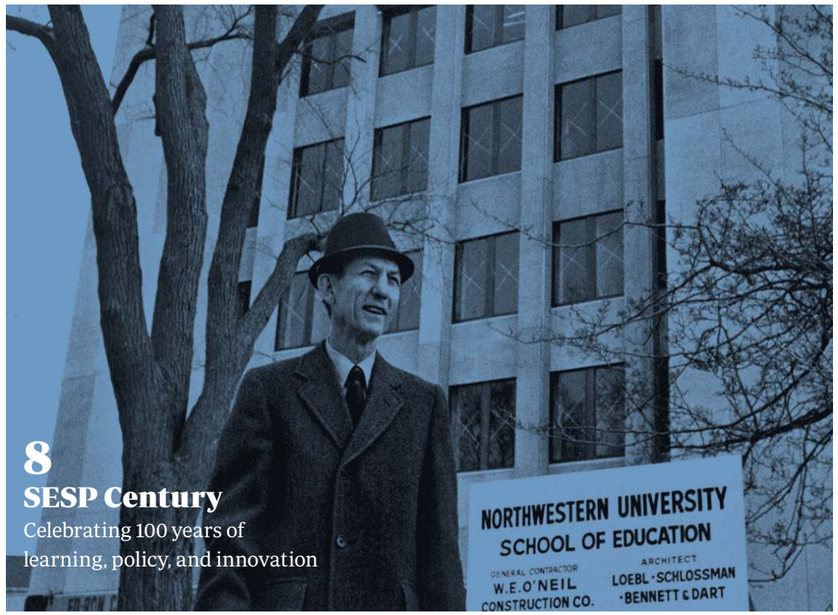
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sespalums@northwestern.edu
847-467-3147

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8
SESP Century
Celebrating 100 years of learning, policy, and innovation

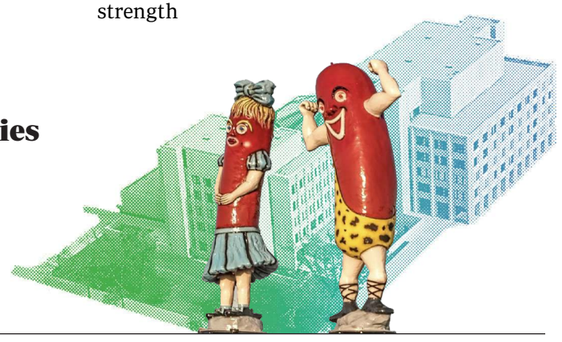




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DEAR SESP COMMUNITY,
SESP's 100th-birthday milestone has me asking questions: What happens when we consider the past? What lessons should we carry forward? And how does the past shape the way we think about the future?

The past can build community by binding us in a shared history: shared memories and experiences; shared affection for courses, people and ideas; and a shared sense of belonging. Celebrations like Homecoming are one example of the ties that bind us.

The past also connects us across generations and lifestyles. Its ties to an institution allow us to become "we" and "us." In Hawaii, people say, "It's a *kākou* thing," meaning it's an everyone thing. The past also shows us how we have evolved over time. We can see growth. Change. Evolution.

Engaging with the past is not always celebratory, however. It can offer caution and perspective, and its lessons help us move with deliberation. It can also distort our memories. I sometimes hear my generation, or my parents', say that today's college students are "cooked" or "won't make it." I am simultaneously amused and infuriated when I hear this, because it is exactly the message I received when I was in college. Our current students are remarkable. They are smart, driven, and curious. They care about each other and the world around them. And they are fun. They are wildly competent and will guide our future with care and rigor.



This issue is the first of two magazines celebrating how our past shapes our future, and it features one very special alumnus, Eli Krumbein (MS56, PhD60), who knows firsthand what it feels like to be 100 years old. Born on July 4, 1926, Eli works part-time as a psychologist, lives on his own, and still handwrites us thoughtful letters after he receives the magazine. He has been part of SESP's journey nearly from the beginning, and his commitment to social responsibility and community well-being is one reason our school's past and present leave me excited about the future: about our role in making it, in growing into it, and in moving deliberately and decisively. People like Eli have given us a blueprint for living life with courage and determination.

Now let's celebrate. Thank you for all you do for our school. Happy birthday to us!

Warmly,

Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy
Dean and Carlos Montezuma Professor of Education and Social Policy

SESP Ranked No. 2 Education School

The School of Education and Social Policy earned its highest rating in school history, landing second among graduate schools of education in *U.S. News & World Report*'s 2026 national rankings. The achievement underscores the school's consistent standing among the nation's best: Since breaking into the top 10 in 2002, SESP has never fallen outside the top 15, reflecting its ongoing commitment to students and to interdisciplinary work, research, and innovation.



Trautvetter to Retire



Founding director of the Higher Education Administration and Policy program, professor **Lois Trautvetter** is retiring after more than three decades at SESP. Her path to academia wasn't linear: She considered law, majored in chemistry, then earned a master's in chemical engineering before completing a PhD in higher education administration at the University of Michigan.

"As a scientist, I look at life as really one big experiment," she says. "As Albert Einstein said, 'Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.'"

Trautvetter joined Northwestern as a postdoc in 1992. When Trautvetter's mentor died in 1998, dean Penelope Peterson recruited her to teach his course just weeks after she'd given birth—a moment Trautvetter calls a career turning point. In 2003 she was hired to build the program, now one of the country's top in the field, with more than 500 graduates.

Her research examined women's experiences in STEM and, later, mentoring's role in recruiting and retaining underrepresented groups. Colleagues and former students describe Trautvetter as relentless and a "masterful connector." She officially retires in 2027; until then, she'll continue her research with astrophysicists, mathematicians, biologists, and robotics engineers to explore the mentoring, career development, and team dynamics that shape who goes into—and remains in—STEM fields.

Hi, what can I help you with?

+ Can Creativity and AI Coexist?



Northwestern's spring conference on art and creativity in the age of AI examined a central tension among artists: Some embrace AI as a tool, while others resist it.

"The question isn't whether the technology is useful or helps us work faster," said **Dan Perlman** (BS12), artist in residence at the Center for Responsible Tech, Policy, and Public Dialogue. "It's whether, in automating so much, we're failing to develop the skills that help us find our voice—missing out on relationships and losing one of the most vital elements of art: its collaborative nature."

The two-day conference, organized by SESP professors **Sepehr Vakil**, **Michael Horn**, and **Claudia Haase**, featured short talks, student panels, and poster sessions—and ended with music and stand-up comedy at Sketchbook Brewing Company. Panelists included Google Creative Lab's Aaron Wade and artist Molly Jones alongside Perlman. Students presented capstone projects and posters and discussed a new undergraduate course on AI and creativity.

Keynote speaker Safiya Noble, author of *Algorithms of Oppression*, argued that AI systems reinforce existing racism and inequality. She introduced the concept of "data double consciousness"—how data systems misrepresent underserved communities. She closed by noting that art can help people "transform these conversations" and become "far more powerful than the tech industry wants us to be."

Brayboy Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Dean **Bryan Brayboy** was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious honorary societies. Northwestern's first Native American dean and a citizen of the Lumbee tribe, Brayboy studies how Indigenous people learn, teach, and see themselves within larger systems of power. He joins the academy's 2026 class alongside the Feinberg School of Medicine's Joseph T. Bass and honorees including actor Jodie Foster and writer Colson Whitehead. An education anthropologist known for rigorous scholarship paired with humor and humility, Brayboy began developing tribal critical race theory in 2005, a groundbreaking framework examining race, power, and Indigenous sovereignty.



First Associate Dean for Master's and Professional Education



Miriam Gamoran Sherin was named associate dean for master's and professional education, a new role that reflects the growing scope and importance of those programs to the school. The Alice Gabrielle Twight Professor of Learning Sciences, Sherin will provide academic and organizational leadership across the school's portfolio of master's, certificate, and professional development programs. A member of the National Academy of Education, Sherin joined the Northwestern faculty in 1997 and has served in several leadership roles at SESP, including director of undergraduate education and associate dean for teacher education.

First NetLogo Conference Bridges Research and Teaching

Northwestern hosted the first NetLogo Conference, bringing together academics and K–12 teachers to share, learn, and connect. The free software tool, used by hundreds of thousands worldwide, lets researchers, teachers, artists, and students simulate complex systems, from forest fires and tick infestations to traffic jams and disease outbreaks. Users program individual "agents" within a system, then watch what unfolds as the agents interact.

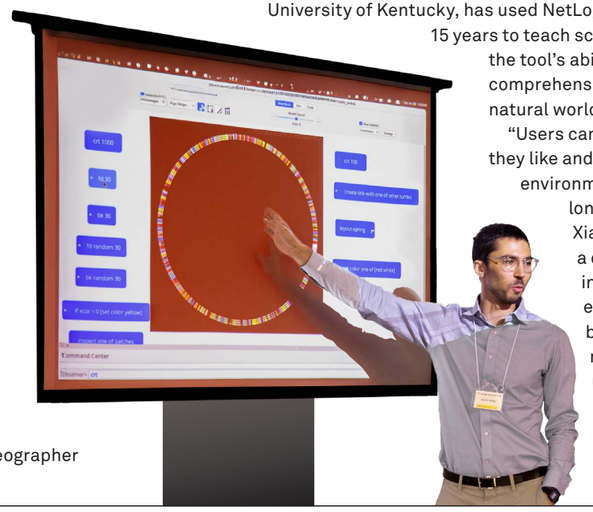
NetLogo creator and Northwestern professor **Uri Wilensky**—a recent winner of the Yidan Prize for his work developing the tool—opened the June event with a keynote conversation with **Jacob Kelter** (PhD25), pictured, executive director of the NetLogo Center at SESP. Other speakers included Josh Epstein, founding director of the New York University Agent-Based Modeling Laboratory, and Moira Zellner, director of participatory modeling and data science at Northeastern University.

NetLogo's versatility was on display throughout the talks and workshops, drawing experts from many fields. Rebecca Vandewalle, a computational geographer with a background in classical archaeology, said NetLogo lets her study familiar questions with new precision.

"We have powerful tools to explore spatial patterns, but software like NetLogo allows us to connect patterns with the processes that may have generated them," said Vandewalle, an assistant professor at the University of South Florida.

Lin Xiang, an associate professor of science education at the University of Kentucky, has used NetLogo for more than 15 years to teach science and praised the tool's ability to provide a comprehensive view of the natural world.

"Users can wander anywhere they like and even alter the environment to observe the long-term impacts," Xiang said. "They gain a deeper understanding of the system. For educators, this flexibility means there is no single right way to use NetLogo, opening many possibilities for the science classroom."



In Memoriam: Allan Collins

August 7, 1936–April 20, 2026

Allan Meakin Collins, a major force in the learning sciences and cognitive science, worked in those fields before they even had names. He became a key part of Northwestern's Institute for the Learning Sciences, a pioneering research unit established in 1989 that anchored the development of the field. In 1991 SESP launched the nation's first learning sciences doctoral program.

Few people have deeper roots in both fields than did Collins, says Christopher Riesbeck, associate professor of computer science at the McCormick School of Engineering and codirector of the Center for Computer Science and Learning Sciences. In fact, Collins's work straddled several. In psychology, he was best known for concepts like semantic memory (knowing facts) and plausible reasoning (educated guessing). In AI, he researched reasoning and "intelligent" tutoring systems; in education, he studied how people learn through experience and practice.

"He was always curious, logical, incisive, and ready to lend a helping hand—particularly if it involved puzzling out a complex problem," says his daughter, Elizabeth.

Collins earned three degrees from the University of Michigan, including a PhD in cognitive psychology in 1970. Professor emeritus Andrew Ortony, a longtime friend and colleague, was an assistant professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign when he first met Collins in 1973 at a meeting of the Psychonomics Society. They began working together and secured a multimillion-dollar grant from the National Institute of Education in 1976 to found the Center for the Study of Reading at Illinois.

When Northwestern established the Institute for the Learning Sciences with many new faculty positions in education, psychology, and computer science, both Ortony and Collins came aboard. The 1987 paper "Cognitive Apprenticeship: Teaching the Craft of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics," coauthored by Collins, is a foundational resource and one of the reasons he was an obvious hire for the fledgling learning sciences program, Riesbeck says. Also a cofounder of the Cognitive Science Society, Collins continued his research on the use of technology in education throughout his working life.

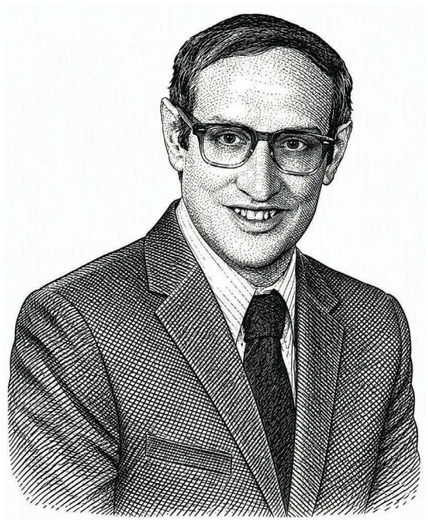
When Penelope Peterson became dean of SESP in 1997, she met with Collins, whom she calls "one of the school's most renowned faculty members" and a humble and gentle soul. "With Allan's passing, our field has lost not only a groundbreaking scholar and mentor of junior faculty, but also a wonderful human being," she says.

In 2005 Collins retired from his position as a professor of learning sciences; three years later, he was inducted as an inaugural fellow of the American Educational Research Association. He was also a member of the National Academy of Education and a fellow of the American Association for Artificial Intelligence, the Cognitive Science Society, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

As professor emeritus, he continued mentoring and writing articles and books. Though both retired, he and Ortony in 2022 published the second edition of their foundational 1998 book *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions*.

Greg Shrader, who earned his doctorate in learning sciences in 2000 at SESP and served as a research scientist at Northwestern until 2004, remembers Collins's generosity of time. "As busy as he was, when he spoke with you, you had his full attention," says Shrader, now CEO at Wellspring International Education. "He thrived on engaging students on topics he felt were important."

Adds Ortony, "He was a kind, patient, and sweet man with a brilliant intellect."



"He was always curious, logical, incisive, and ready to lend a helping hand—particularly if it involved puzzling out a complex problem."

—Elizabeth Collins



Kate Cichon



Peri Green



Sam Keillor



Natalie Araujo Melo



John Olson



Jacob Puthipiroj



Brian Reiser



Hannes Schwandt



James Spillane



Andrew Stein



Caryn Tran



Shirin Vossoughi

IN BRIEF

Kate Cichon, assistant director of programs for the Center for Talent Development, was named 2026 SESP staff member of the year.

Professor **Cynthia Coburn** received the Martin E. and Gertrude G. Walder Award for Research Excellence.

Peri Green, a learning sciences graduate student, received Northwestern's prestigious Presidential Fellowship for her work exploring how children's environments can create or reduce opportunities for learning.

Professor **Claudia Haase** spoke at the TEDx-NorthwesternU conference on the importance of moments of connection for relationships, health, and the lifespan.

Professor **Sneha Kumar** coauthored the article "Who Can Have a Baby? Social Norms and the Right to Reproduce," which was published in the *American Sociological Review* and won the award for distinguished contribution to population scholarship at the 2026 American Sociological Association annual meeting.

Natalie Araujo Melo (PhD26) won the 2026 award for doctoral dissertation excellence from the Network of the Learning Sciences in Canada.

Assistant professor of instruction **John Olson** participated in a panel for the Federal Reserve's Connecting Communities series, presenting research on "benefits cliffs"—the pitfalls in the US tax and transfer system that inhibit upward mobility.

Jacob Puthipiroj, who is pursuing his doctorate in computer science and learning sciences, discussed his work on using a spiral curriculum (revisiting ideas at increasing levels of complexity) as a formal model of learning at Northwestern's annual Computation and Data Exchange. His research focuses on AI education, knowledge representation, and computational linguistics.

Professor **Brian Reiser**, postdoctoral scholars **Jason Buell** and **Yang Zhang**, and senior program coordinator **Kelsey Edwards** (BS13, MS20) were part of the writing team that won the Research Worth Reading award from the *Journal of Research on Science Teaching*. Reiser led the OpenSciEd Elementary Developers Consortium, which generated 24 free science curriculum units for kindergarten through fifth grade.

The EC*REACH early childhood research hub, codirected by professor **Terri Sabol**, drew nearly 300 researchers, providers, and policymakers to Chicago for its second annual conference.

New research coauthored by professor **Hannes Schwandt**, published in the *American Economic Review* and covered by *The Economist* and other news outlets, suggests that younger children are more likely than their older siblings to be hospitalized for respiratory illness during the first months of life.

Professor **James Spillane** and doctoral student **Sam Keillor** presented their paper "Becoming a City Principal: New Principals' Sense-Making About the 'Visibility Imperative' and Emotional Labor" at the annual European Conference on Educational Research.

Postdoctoral scholars **Karla Thomas** (PhD26) and **briana rodríguez** won 2026 National Academy of Education/Spencer Research Fellowships. Graduate students **Andrew Stein** and **Corey Winchester** received the organization's dissertation fellowships.

Doctoral student **Caryn Tran** was lead author of the study "Starting from Scratch Again and Again: Tracing the Origins of High Schoolers' Negative Perceptions of Block-Based Programming," which earned a best paper award at the Association for Computing Machinery CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems.

Professor **Shirin Vossoughi** was elected a fellow of the International Society of Learning Sciences for her work studying how and why people learn.

A Century *of* LEARNING *and* LEADING

By Julie Deardorff

As one of the first students in Northwestern University's newly established School of Education, **Bernice Boye** (BS27, MS32) chose from such classes as The Measurement of Intelligence and The High School Curriculum. It was 1926 as the fledgling school, still part of the College of Liberal Arts, prepared undergraduates to teach in the nation's elementary and secondary schools.

But the School of Education would quickly evolve into a standalone college that does much more than train teachers for the classroom. It grew exponentially in both size and vision during the 1930s and '40s, becoming one of the top private schools of education in the nation. By the 1970s, it had expanded well beyond its traditional mission and had become known for interdisciplinary study, research, and learning in nonschool settings.

That expansion became official in 1986, when the trustees voted to add "Social Policy" to the school's name and mission, reflecting the understanding that learning happens everywhere—in homes, communities, and workplaces—and throughout life.

"It's clear that some of our major societal problems can no longer be addressed within the old framework of education," said then dean David Wiley in a 1987 *Northwestern Observer* article. "The social policy in our name indicates our interest in formulating change in education, [in] people who will develop goals and try to accomplish them. Our research is carried out with the intention of making definite improvements in society."

In addition to education experts, the School of Education and Social Policy became home to developmental, cognitive, and social psychologists; sociologists; economists; political scientists; historians; and computer scientists—all working together to build a deeper understanding of how people learn and how policy affects the real world. In the 1990s, SESP's faculty members began winning prestigious awards and recognition from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Education, and the American Educational Research Association.

"SESP was ahead of its time in stepping outside the traditional mold of 'professional' schools of education," wrote historian Bruce Colwell (PhD88) in a history of the school. Addressing challenging problems with two innovative doctoral programs—Human Development and Social Policy, and Learning Sciences—"recognized that educational issues involve social, economic, and developmental considerations."

At the same time, SESP has remained true to its Progressive Era roots of training educators, centering children, and connecting with the community. Yet it has evolved into an interdisciplinary hub where scholars and students study the growing influence of technology on how people learn and the ways policy can expand opportunity.

Boye, who died in 2002 at age 97, would likely be fascinated by the modern version of The High School Curriculum course. After Northwestern, she spent 46 years working in Chicago as an elementary, high school, and college teacher, principal, and school superintendent. Now called The History and Evolution of the Modern High School and taught by professor Simone Ispa-Landa, the course covers how schools changed in response to major social forces, including industrialization, immigration, racial segregation, suburbanization, and ever-shifting legal landscapes. Though the emphasis on policy is different, Boye would recognize the type of students who are drawn to SESP: learners and leaders who want to make a difference as teachers, judges, CEOs, counselors, lawyers, businesspeople, public servants—or whatever path they choose.



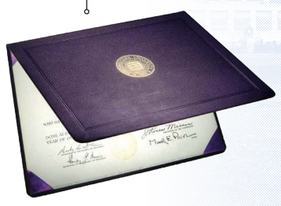
1851
Northwestern University is founded; **Old College** is its first building.

1888
Northwestern offers **education courses** for the first time.

1906
Northwestern's **Department of Education** is founded in the College of Liberal Arts.

1926
The **School of Education** is established, housed inside Old College, which becomes the Education Building. **John Stout** is named the school's first dean.

1927
The **bachelor of science** in education degree is first conferred, on 14 students.



1941
The school's **first research doctorate degree** program is offered. Originally in the School of Education, the music and speech education programs move to their respective Northwestern schools.

1953–63
The school begins to expand as a traditional school of education. More faculty are hired, and programs in home economics, health, and gifted education are added. A **master of arts in teaching** is added in 1961.

1963–78
Under dean **B. J. Chandler**, the **Tutorial Clinical Program** replaces traditional lecture-style methods courses to make teacher training more relevant to students. **Upward Bound** brings inner-city high school students to campus each summer.





1969
The **Center for the Teaching Professions**, designed for anyone who teaches, not just those in schools, is established with a **$2.8 million** grant from the Kellogg Foundation and directed by professor B. Claude Mathis.

1972
The School of Education moves from Old College to **Andersen Hall**.



1973
Old College—built as a temporary structure but somehow still standing after more than a century—is **struck by lightning** and razed after the sprinkler system floods the building.

1979–92
Dean **David Wiley** begins establishing programs that resemble today's structure, with undergraduate concentrations in human development and social policy, teacher education, administrative and policy studies, and counseling psychology.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY TIMELINE

1982

A new **master of science** program is created to prepare teachers and administrators for elementary and secondary schools—the first graduate degree fully administered by the School of Education rather than the Graduate School.

The Midwest Talent Search is created by professor and associate dean **Joyce VanTassel-Baska**. The program, which later becomes the **Center for Talent Development**, initially offers above-grade testing for talent identification; educational enrichment and acceleration programs are added soon after.





1993

The school moves into the newly constructed **Annenberg Hall**.

1997

Penelope Peterson becomes the first woman to assume the deanship. She leads for a record two decades, helping the school strengthen its identity as an interdisciplinary, research-driven institution.

2002

The **Master's in Learning and Organizational Change** program becomes a standalone degree program, designed to prepare leaders seeking to improve organizations. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks the school among the **nation's top 10** graduate schools of education for the first time, a distinction SESP has earned 21 times since.



1981

The **Human Development and Social Policy** doctoral program is founded by psychologist **Bernice L. Neugarten**. The groundbreaking program highlights the contributions of psychology, sociology, and economics toward understanding human development across the lifespan and how life is shaped by policies and institutions.



1986

The School of Education is renamed the **School of Education and Social Policy**, reflecting a broader mission and the importance of connecting policy with education, family, work, and community.

Northwestern
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL POLICY

1991

The world's **first learning sciences doctoral program**, which grew out of Northwestern's Institute for the Learning Sciences, accepts its inaugural cohort.

1992

Allan Collins becomes the first SESP faculty member elected to the National Academy of Education. SESP now has 18 members.

NATIONAL ACADEMY of EDUCATION

2000

Professor **Dan Lewis** designs the **Certificate in Civic Engagement** with Robert Donahue, laying the groundwork for the Center for Civic Engagement. Lewis directs the center for more than a decade; Donahue is the current director.



1999

The **Tarry Center** opens in Annenberg Hall, giving students a stunning lakefront view, increasing space by more than 25 percent, and opening two cutting-edge teaching and learning studios that become models for classroom design.



2011

The **Higher Education Administration and Policy** concentration becomes a standalone master's degree program.



2016

SESP launches the nation's first joint **learning sciences and computer science doctoral program**. The undergraduate program in learning sciences admits its first students.

2021

The dual-degree **Master's in Applied Economics and Social and Economic Policy** program, a joint program with the Chinese University of Hong Kong, enrolls its first cohort.



2024

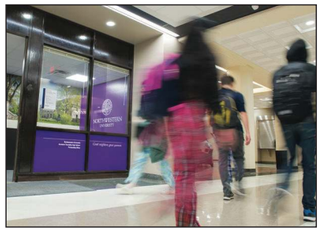
The school receives a $1 million gift from the Kapor Foundation to establish the **Center for Responsible Technology, Policy, and Public Dialogue**.



2026

SESP is ranked the **No. 2** graduate school of education by *U.S. News & World Report*, the school's highest ranking ever.

2012



Northwestern and SESP establish a partnership office at **Evanston Township High School** to connect University resources and expertise with the local community.

2013

Dean Peterson teaches the first **Learning Philanthropy** course, in which students are given $100,000 to distribute to actual nonprofit organizations.



2023

Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy is named dean. An anthropologist of education, Brayboy is the first Native American dean in the history of Northwestern.



The school moves into the newly renovated **2001 Sheridan Road** building.

SESP @100

2025

The new **Master's in Technology, People, and Policy** program is launched. It examines how new technologies influence ethics, law, the environment, people, and public policy.

LASTING LEGACIES

A new academic field called Native American literary studies. High-definition television. A hot dog emoji. These are just a few of the legacies SESP alumni have created during our 100-year history.

By Julie Deardorff



JEAN W. CAMPBELL (MA/MS39)

A pioneer who fought for work-life balance

A lifelong advocate for women's rights, Campbell was instrumental in creating the University of Michigan's Center for the Education of Women in 1964, where she was director for more than 20 years. The first of its kind, the center helped women return to college after their education was interrupted by pregnancy,



childcare responsibilities, or other reasons. She championed courses with flexible hours and support services and scholarships, playing a key role in developing research on women's education. A resident of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Campbell also founded the National Center for Research on Women and the National Coalition for Research on Women's Education and Development. She was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 1993. Campbell died in 2016 at age 98.

LORRAINE MORTON (MS42)

Mayor and public school educator who led a life of service

Evanston's longest-serving mayor and the first Black person to hold the office, Morton was a steady voice for equality, education, and community. One of nine children born in segregated Winston-Salem, North Carolina, she earned her master's in education in 1942, a time when Black students couldn't live on campus. But she harbored no bitterness. "I never had a bad experience at the University," she said in 2007. "I always remembered why I was here. A university is more than just courses—it widens your mind. Northwestern opened another

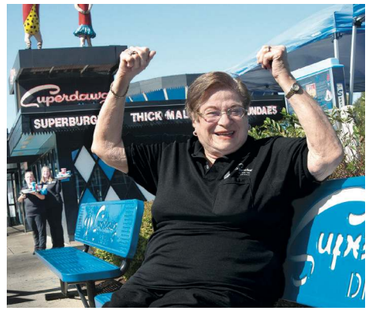


horizon for me." In 1953 Morton began teaching in Evanston, becoming the first Black teacher at Nichols Middle School in 1957. As Evanston's schools became a national model for integration, she worked as a desegregation consultant to districts across the country. Morton served as alderman of the city's Fifth Ward from 1982 to 1991, then was elected mayor in 1993. After serving four terms, she retired in 2009, and the city renamed its civic center in her honor. "I only did what my mother and father told me," Morton said in a documentary on her life. "As he was dying, my father said, 'Only a life of service is a life worthwhile.'" Morton died in 2018 at age 99.

FLORENCE "FLAURIE" BERMAN (BS47)

Cofounder of Chicago's iconic Superdawg

In May 1948, with her high school sweetheart, Maurie, Berman opened a seasonal hot dog stand in Chicago's Norwood Park neighborhood that became the beloved



Superdawg Drive-In, one of the last original drive-in restaurants in the country. When Flaurie and Maurie were forced to buy their rented lot to keep the restaurant, Berman left her teaching career at Chicago Public Schools to run the carhop operation full-time, turning the side venture into a year-round institution. Seventy years later, Superdawg still serves its original all-beef recipe with carhop service, beneath lovingly refurbished 12-foot hot dog statues modeled after Flaurie and Maurie themselves. In 2014, when a general manager noticed that smartphones were missing a hot dog emoji, the family launched a social media campaign that resulted in Apple's adding one. Since the couple's deaths, their family now serves Superdawg's fourth generation of customers.

A. LAVONNE BROWN RUOFF (BS53)

Founder of the American Indian literary studies academic field

Ruoff earned her bachelor's degree in secondary English education in 1953 over the objections of friends—and even her doctor—who believed college would be "too much for a married woman." She went on to earn a doctorate and started teaching Native American literature in the 1970s, when many people didn't believe such literature existed. In 1990,



as a professor of English at the University of Illinois Chicago, she published *American Indian Literatures*, a landmark reference book that helped establish the study of Native American literature as a formal academic field. The *Chicago Tribune* praised her discoveries in archives and libraries around the country of long out-of-print works by Native Americans: "Ruoff has shepherded dozens of obscure works back into print, providing key historical and cultural context for a literary tradition as old as the country. Along the way, Ruoff has befriended and mentored a generation of writers and scholars who have transformed the study of Native American literature into a vital academic field." Ruoff received the Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award of the Modern Language Association, the preeminent professional organization of scholars of literature.

RICHARD WILEY (BS55, PRITZKER58)

The "father of high-definition television"

One of the most influential media and telecommunications lawyers in the US, Wiley spent seven years at the Federal Communications Commission as general counsel, commissioner, and ultimately chairman from 1974 to 1977. He became a leading force behind the agency's early push toward greater competition and lighter regulation in the media. From 1987 to 1995, he chaired the FCC's Advisory Committee on Advanced Television Service, playing a pivotal role in the development of high-definition TV. "High-definition TV was the holy grail for me," he told *Arlington Magazine* in 2014.



"A lot of people said, 'Who cares about pretty pictures?' It was the most interesting and rewarding thing I was ever involved with." He's now chairman emeritus of Wiley Rein, the Washington, D.C., firm he cofounded in 1983 and built into one of the nation's largest communications-law practices. The Media Institute honored him with the 1992 Freedom of Speech Award and 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award. His own 65-inch television hangs above his fireplace.

BARBARA SMITH WYNNE (BS55)

Giving children a chance to play

A legend in the Indianapolis tennis community, Wynne began teaching the sport to neighborhood kids in 1955. Within a few years she established the



Washington Township Schools Community Tennis Program, growing its capacity from 6 to 44 courts; it has served more than 24,000 people. With her friend, tennis champ Arthur Ashe, she founded the city's chapter of the National Junior Tennis League, introducing more than 34,000 children to the sport. In 2004 the tennis facility she helped build was renamed in her honor, and she has received the International Tennis Hall of Fame's Educational Merit and International Tennis Federation's Service to Tennis Awards. In 2018 she was named a tennis legend at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, where visitors can pose beside her bronze statue. Wynne died in July at age 93. "She lived with energy, determination, and a belief that people were capable of more when someone gave them an opportunity," her family said.

RAY LOESCHNER (MA/MS62, PHD62)

A legacy of leadership

In 1955 Loeschner built a public miniature golf course in his family's backyard in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to help pay for graduate school. Now called Loeschner's Village Green, the course is still family owned and one of many legacies he's left during his career in higher education. A community college graduate and then football and track star at Albion College, Loeschner spent two years in the US Navy before pursuing graduate education while working as an assistant football and track coach. He then began his career in higher education, which included coaching football and track and serving as president of Olivet College and Ohio Northern University in the 1970s. Now



retired, Loeschner, former president of the private company Loeschner Enterprises, is known for giving back. He founded and was longtime president of the Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park Foundation in Grand Rapids, and in 2013 he helped establish the Ray and Nancy Loeschner Lecture Series on Leadership at SESP to bring visionary speakers to campus—an annual event that is still going strong. Another legacy: Loeschner's grandson, James Keane (BS16, Kellogg MBA17).

JANE WALLER (MA69)

First female judge in Lake County, Illinois

When Waller was appointed an associate judge in Lake County, Illinois, in 1981, she became the first woman in the county to hold that position. She was later elected a full circuit judge and in 2000 was chief judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit. Waller presided over family law cases for 19 of her almost 28 years on the bench; for a



decade, she was chief presiding judge of the county's family court, where she introduced psychological evaluations for parents in custody disputes and mandatory parenting classes for divorcing couples with children. She also helped establish Kids Korner, the first courthouse waiting room in the state for children brought to the courthouse by parents or guardians on court business, "to spare them the pain and hostility of attending court proceedings affecting their families," she said. Waller retired from the bench in 2008, then practiced family law for another decade. These days she's taking piano lessons, painting, knitting, and hoping to learn Spanish. "I credit my year at Northwestern with building my courage and confidence to take on big challenges," she said.

ALETA MARGOLIS (MS91)

Founder of the Center for Inspired Teaching

When Margolis began her career, teaching high school students in the juvenile justice system, she thought about how school can both fuel and suppress a student's potential. She went on to teach third and sixth grades and later trained future teachers as a professor at American University. In 1995 she founded the Center for Inspired Teaching, a nonprofit that trains teachers to help students investigate ideas rather than simply absorb information. "Teachers are the most creative problem

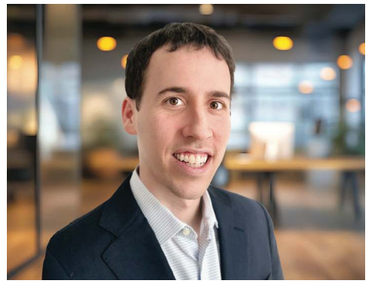


solvers on the planet," she says. She became the center's president in 2016, focused on building public support for schools that emphasize student participation over compliance. Under her leadership, the center has earned recognition from the LEGO Foundation, the LRNG Innovation Challenge, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She was selected as an Ashoka Fellow in 2001 for "revitalizing public education by unlocking the personal creativity of teachers and thereby dramatically improving student learning."

MICHAEL ALPERIN (BS11)

Working to solve the housing crisis

SESP's class of 2011 valedictorian, Alperin joined Teach For America and taught in Brooklyn, where most of his students lived in public housing. Tutoring them after school, he saw that while they may have had a good classroom environment,



many children would go home to mold, broken plumbing, noisy neighbors, and families cycling between apartments. Some families periodically slept on the subway. For those who missed breakfast, he kept a stash of cereal at his desk. "It wasn't a direct thought," he says, "but implicitly I probably saw that housing is critical to helping kids thrive." In 2023 he founded Terra Living Partners, which has raised $450 million to convert market-rate housing into residences designated for those who earn too much to qualify for traditional subsidized housing but are priced out of market-rate rents. Housing policy is one leg of a triad, alongside health and education policy, that determines whether families can find stability, he says. What he loves most is seeing the smile on residents' faces when they walk into a unit—floors and appliances they're proud of, in communities they couldn't otherwise afford. "It's invigorating to provide people a home."

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Other notable graduates who left their mark in classrooms, boardrooms, and beyond

OTHERIE LOVE (BS41)



Evanston's first Black student teacher and later a tax preparer and, at age 101, her senior community's poet laureate

J. WARREN PERRY (MA/MS52, PHD55)



A scholar, administrator, author, lecturer, and founding dean of the University at Buffalo School of Public Health and Health Professions

GWEN ROSSET KNAPP (BS56)



Cofounder of the Gwen Knapp Center for Lupus and Immunology Research at the University of Chicago

BETSY HOLDEN (MA/MS57, PHD62)



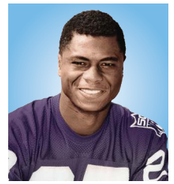
Board director, consultant, and retired senior adviser at McKinsey & Company and former CEO of Kraft Foods

MICHAEL BAKALIS (BS59)



President and CEO of American Quality Schools Corporation and previously deputy US secretary of education, Illinois state superintendent of education, and president of Triton College

IRV CROSS (BS61)



Former professional football player and sportscaster and the first Black full-time sports analyst on national television

ELAINE SCHUSTER (MA/MS71)



First layperson named superintendent of Catholic schools for the Archdiocese of Chicago and later CEO of the Golden Apple Foundation

SUSAN POPKIN (BS82, MS86, PHD88)



A leading national expert on public housing policy at the Urban Institute

DEBORAH GOLD (PHD86)



First student ever to receive a doctorate in human development and social policy; her dissertation won an award from the American Sociological Association's Section on Aging. She is now professor emerita at Duke University Medical Center

SALLIE TUCKER-ALLEN (PHD86)



Wrote a SESP dissertation that led to the founding of what is now known as the Association of Black Nursing Faculty, the first organization of its kind

KELLY O'DONNELL (BS87)



Emmy-winning NBC News correspondent covering the White House and Capitol Hill

DAVID HARRIS (BS91)



President emeritus of Union College and former provost of Tufts University

SAM SCHILLER (BS09)



Founder and CEO of Carbon Yield, through which farmers earn compensation for regenerative agriculture

RENETTA MCCANN (MS12)



Marketing and advertising executive at Publicis Groupe and Advertising Hall of Fame inductee

JOHN LEE (BS20)



A teacher at Evanston Township High School who helped pass the Illinois Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History Act

Jiimaan Journey Home

By Alison Bowen
Photos by Walter Kitundu



Professor **Megan Bang** (PhD09) and a rotating group of more than 100 other paddlers and crew traveled roughly 350 miles by canoe in July, from Chicago to Michigan's Little Traverse Bay. They were retracing a route once traveled by the Anishinaabe, a group of culturally and linguistically related Indigenous peoples native to the Great Lakes region. Along the way, they raised awareness about Great Lakes conservation and Native water rights.

The group traveled in a single canoe, or *jiimaan* in Anishinaabe, from Calumet Park in Chicago, then along the Indiana and Michigan shorelines. The journey took several weeks, with paddlers covering 25 to 35 miles a day and camping at state parks each night.

"It was like time had slowed and we were in a different realm," says Bang, describing a stretch when the lake went still and rain began to fall in rhythm with the water.

The James E. Johnson Professor of Learning Sciences at the School of Education and Social Policy, Bang helped organize the trip with Anna Lees, a University of Washington professor of learning sciences and a descendant of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians. Participants also included Northwestern students, who both paddled and supported the journey on land.

"People from around the world participated," Bang says. "It was a beautiful thing to see how we could all live well together."

Reviving a route shaped by conflict

Anishinaabe people have long used jiimaan for travel, trade, and ceremony throughout the Great Lakes. From the 1970s through the '90s, tribes including the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians fought the State of Michigan and sport fishers to uphold their treaty rights to fish in the lakes without state interference, a period Bang said still shapes tribal relationships with the water today.

This year's trip built on a tradition that dates to 2008, when the Little Traverse Bay Bands launched a youth paddle in Michigan from Petoskey to Cheboygan. More recent journeys, tied to Bang and Lees's research on Indigenous STEAM education, have included a 2022 trip down the Des Plaines River in Illinois.

This summer's trip coincided with renewed conflict over Canadian energy company Enbridge's plan to build a tunnel beneath the Straits of Mackinac to carry natural gas, a project opposed by Native communities and environmental groups. Michigan regulators approved a permit for the project, and though the state supreme court later overturned that approval, the US Army Corps of Engineers has since allowed construction on the tunnel to proceed; the dispute is ongoing.





(Left) Departing from Ludington, Michigan. (Above) Rounding the Michigan City (Indiana) East Pierhead Lighthouse. (Right) Leaving the harbor in Michigan City.

Welcomed ashore, mile by mile

At each stop, paddlers were met by crowds—some there to support the journey, others buoyed by the curiosity of encountering an expedition unlike anything seen in the region in generations, says Bang, who is Ojibwe and Italian. "We'd explain why we were doing the trip, what our treaty rights are, and who we are as peoples," she adds, referring to the legally binding agreements between the US government and tribal nations that affirm tribal sovereignty and reserve rights such as hunting, fishing, and access to water. "We did this to revitalize jiimaan culture and our trade routes but also to raise awareness about climate change, learn about the lakes' ecosystems, and continue our ancestral relationships to the water."

"Things are hard right now, with climate, with extraction, with everything happening in the world," Lees told *Good Morning Indian Country*. "It feels really important to make that visible through a journey like this and to come together and strengthen our relationships."

Bang notes the adventure would not have happened without Fred Harrington, an elder and jiimaan caretaker who helped build the canoe and was the only paddler who traveled on every leg of the trip, including many alongside his grandson.

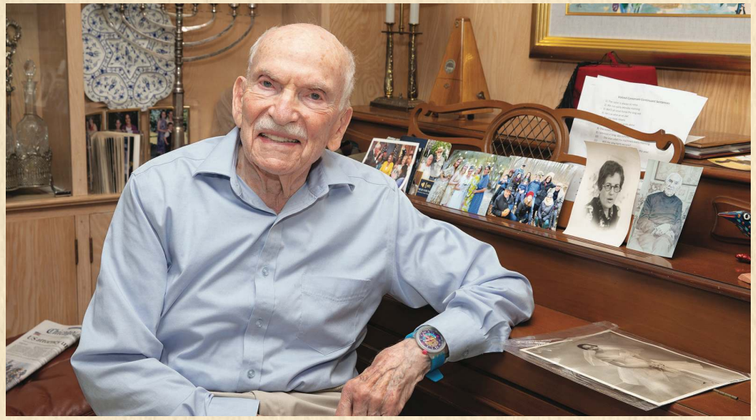
"Fred has the expertise to actually paddle and navigate the Great Lakes like no one else I know," Bang says.

At times the paddlers faced wildfire smoke, headwinds, five-foot swells, and a small leak. The trip ended during a downpour at Josephine Ford Park in Harbor Springs, Michigan, where paddlers were sung ashore by supporters and elders from the Little Traverse Bay Bands.

"A returning and a receiving," says Bang, recalling how the journey began with a song as they left Chicago. "The jiimaan journey gifted all of us so much. I'm grateful to everyone who contributed."

Still Learning, Still Leading at 100

Krumbein's work in equity and school integration reflects lifelong commitment to social responsibility and community well-being



Eliezer Krumbein (MS56, PhD60) isn't quite as tall as he once was, and he conserves energy by running on "low-power mode," sneaking in occasional naps during the day. But like SESP, he turned 100 this year, and despite the trials that come with being a centenarian, Krumbein is going strong.

A lifelong educator who championed school desegregation strategies in the 1960s, Krumbein still works as a clinical psychologist, seeing up to five people a day and usually working 12 hours a week. He exercises regularly, drives, lives on his own in the Chicago suburbs, and takes continuing education classes in psychology.

"He's an optimist and forward-thinker," says his daughter Debbi Dworin, noting that when her father was 85, he decided to get braces. "I find it remarkable that he always manages to identify something new he's learned, even though he has taught or could teach most of the classes he's sitting in on. He comes with both openness and humility."

Those traits—along with a prodigious memory and an ebullient nature—have characterized Krumbein throughout his life. Before pursuing his doctorate at Northwestern in the 1950s, he worked in race-relations education for the Anti-Defamation League and served as director of religious education at a large synagogue. He later became director of education for Northwestern's Transportation Center and an assistant professor at what was then the School of Education, teaching educational history, philosophy, and psychology. In 1967 he joined the University of Illinois Chicago as an associate professor in the College of Education before leaving academia in the early 1980s to practice psychology full-time.

"Eli was like a father figure to me," says Frederick Erickson (PhD69), who met Krumbein in the 1960s and shared an office with him at UIC in the 1970s. "He personified a consistent commitment to justice while recognizing that it's not necessarily an easy path."

Working on educational justice issues in the '60s, Krumbein, Erickson, and Armin Beck (BS56, PhD66) coauthored "Strategies for Change: Conditions for School Desegregation," published in the *Phi Delta Kappan*. They argued that simply placing children of different races in the same classroom wasn't enough—curricula and school culture needed to change too. "Racial antipathy and violence can result from the kind of desegregation that results in the creation of merely biracial schools," they wrote.

When people read the article today, "they say, 'Wow, you guys were really onto something back then,'" says Erickson, now professor emeritus of education and anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Krumbein was born in 1926 in Brooklyn. His elementary schooling was shaped by psychologist John Dewey's progressive education movement; in third grade he started attending religious school, learning Hebrew and diving into Jewish culture.

After graduating from Harvard in 1946, Krumbein came to Chicago for graduate work and met the love of his life, the late Elaine Frohman (WCAS46), while working for the Anti-Defamation League. Shortly after they married in 1950, Krumbein was working 90 hours a week as principal of a religious school and teaching adult classes such as Ethical Implications of World Religions. "Elaine would do the reading for me, stay a couple weeks ahead, teach me the stuff, and then I would go back and teach it," he told his granddaughter Sarah-Bess Dworin in a StoryCorps interview at age 93.

Krumbein fondly recalls mentors like longtime faculty member Joe Park, who helped design Northwestern's first doctoral program in education and philosophy in 1953. He still visits the grave of Franklin Kreml, founding director of Northwestern's Traffic Institute and Transportation Center, for whom Krumbein designed an integrated master's program in transportation. The program drew on experts from eight departments across the University.

At 100, Krumbein remains busy—getting acupuncture, writing letters by hand, and volunteering at a synagogue as an outreach worker for people needing companionship. Though he sees skyrocketing stress in his clients, he remains hopeful. "The sun will rise tomorrow, and the sun will set, and nothing is forever," he says. "We're in a dangerous time, but it's terribly important to be optimistic. The pendulum swings and things will change—they have always changed."

Time Flies When You're Having Fun

Amy and David Sanchez met as SESP undergraduates. Today they're raising two children in Seattle and building careers in education.

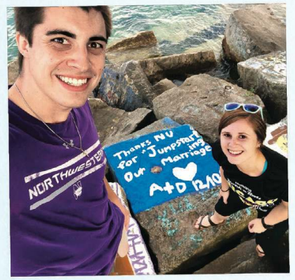
As SESP celebrates its 100th anniversary, alums **Amy (Glazier-Torgerson) Sanchez** (BS15) and **David Sanchez** (BS17) are marking their own milestone: 10 years of marriage. The couple met in 2014 as undergraduates while working with Northwestern's chapter of Jumpstart, a national program that trains students to work with preschoolers. They married in 2016 and moved to Seattle after David graduated.

David now works as a speech-language pathologist in an elementary school, where he uses Jumpstart books in language activities, and at his private practice Brave Stuttering Therapy. He earned a master's degree in the field from the University of Washington in 2021. Amy, an avid marathoner, is assistant head of middle school and a school counselor at Eastside Preparatory School in Kirkland, Washington, and a running coach with the Running Joyfully group.

"At Northwestern we loved the community of amazing educators and the laughs with the kids at Jumpstart," Amy says. The Sanchezes are now reading their Jumpstart books to their own children: Manny, age five, and Maya, two. *Hooray, a Piñata!* is always a hit, David says, but their hearts will always belong to *The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza*. "It's a cool full-circle moment," Amy adds.



Wedding Day!
2016



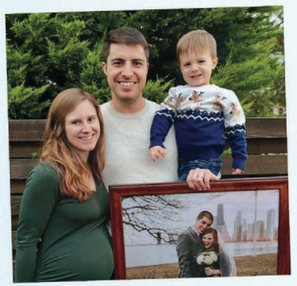
Love graffiti at lakefill rocks
2017



Our first home in Seattle
2019



Baby Manny arrives!
2021



Manny excited for a sister
2023



Baby Maya makes four!
2025

Their Roots, Their Strength

Helping first-generation and low-income students thrive by drawing on their knowledge, cultures, and experiences—and building a community that values them

By Alina Dizik



For **Rachel Kwak** (BS21), heading off to Northwestern from her home in Nashville didn't mean leaving her own story behind. As a participant in the SESP Leadership Institute, she drew on her family's immigration experience to thrive academically.

"It made me view the idea of smartness differently," says Kwak, now a staff attorney with Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach's Immigration Rights Project in Oakland, California. "We got to critique who created the term—and for whom—in the context of predominantly white institutions."

Each year, about two dozen first- and second-year and transfer students join SLI, a program built on a simple premise: that first-generation, low-income students don't need to be brought up to speed to flourish at Northwestern. Instead, they need an environment that recognizes and draws on their own knowledges and cultures. Since its launch in 2017, the program has grown from a two-and-a-half-week summer intensive into a fall-quarter experience anchored by two courses, a weekend retreat in Wisconsin,

> "We're reimagining what it means to do rigorous academic work in ways that are deeply rooted in culture and community."
>
> — Shirin Vossoughi

and a tight-knit community that follows students through their time at Northwestern. More than 200 have participated, and the relationships that result help students build lasting connections and friendships. Quarterly meetups keep program alumni involved, who can return as undergraduate peer leaders on the teaching team, helping design and teach lessons, read and provide feedback on student work, and facilitate small groups.

SLI students take two specific courses: Shirin Vossoughi's Culture and Cognition and Mesmin Destin's Leaders Lab.

"We're reimagining what it means to do rigorous academic work in ways that are deeply rooted in culture and community," says Vossoughi, associate professor of learning sciences, who created SLI with Destin, professor of human development and social policy and faculty director of student access and enrichment.

In one project, students interview older family members, share clips of these stories with one another in class, and write analytic essays using course concepts. Kwak spoke with her grandfather, a Korean tae kwon do grandmaster who described the grueling custodial work he took on after moving to the US—a sharp contrast to the jobs he'd left behind.

"Hearing others' stories helped me understand the lives people live before immigrating to the US," she says, which also helped her empathize with her future legal clients. Culture and Cognition changed how she viewed her parents' bilingualism, teaching her to see what she once considered a disadvantage as a strength. "That class completely



> "Hearing others' stories helped me understand the lives people live before immigrating to the US."
>
> —Rachel Kwak

transformed the way I looked at growing up in a bilingual, bicultural household."

SLI's philosophy differs from many programs for first-generation, low-income students in that it encourages them to draw on their own lives to learn and expand how knowledge is created in the fields they're entering. For a long time, Destin says, there's been a tendency to see students from marginalized backgrounds as lacking something. "Our approach counters that. This program is designed to embrace, connect, and elevate what students bring, not to catch them up."

That distinction matters, because academic ability isn't the issue. SLI students already have a track record of success, Destin adds, yet many feel institutions of higher education aren't built for their needs. "Students who succeed without a community like SLI may still look back and think they just got through it and never feel a deep sense of connection."

The program has evolved substantially in addition to the weekend retreat—readings and assignments change based on feedback from previous years. It's also shaped by student ideas. This year, undergraduate Yelim



Members of SLI's 2026 graduating class with Shirin Vossoughi (third from right) and Mesmin Destin (far right)

Kim proposed adding the book *Unassimilable*, by Asian American author Bianca Mabute-Louie, to a course, while peer leader Theo Damita suggested broadening the definition of family to include anyone whom students consider kin. Both ideas were adopted. "We encourage students to share their ideas as important resources for iterating the program over time," Vossoughi says.

For Kimani Isaac (BS20), now pursuing a dual MBA/MA in international studies at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, the program's lessons have stayed years past graduation. One particularly memorable class reading was "The Working Life of a Waitress" by Mike Rose, a story making the case that everyday work is complex—and that understanding it fully takes more than one kind of knowledge.

"SLI helped me refine and take ownership over my own story," Isaac says. "I've already pivoted professionally a few times, and knowing how to tell my story and connect with people has helped me immensely."



ALUMNUS'S SUPPORT WILL HELP SLI GROW

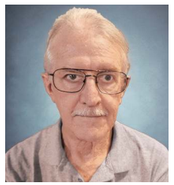
A $1 million gift to the SESP Leadership Institute from **D. Steve Boland** (BS90) will support operations and allow the program to grow further, enhancing faculty and staff leadership, supporting graduate students who serve as teaching assistants, bolstering the peer mentorship program, and expanding student programming. Boland, vice chair of Truist and former Bank of America chief administrative officer and president of retail banking, says SLI's work is more critical than ever. "These students bring perspectives and experiences that strengthen our community and enrich the work we hope to do in the world."


Dagny Bloland

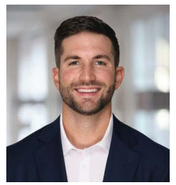

Elizabeth Oppen Eshoo


Andrew Krantz


Emily Velazquez


Dave Conant


Julie Flapan


Luke Dauch


Sugat Dabholkar


Cheryl Thomas Strickland


Trey Morgan


Lya Ferreyra


Ezra Sergent-Leventhal


Patricia Jones Blessman


Amy Gale


Catherine Ettinger


Jack Lausch

60s

Dagny Bloland (BS69) has taught in the Master of Science in Education program since 2002 and has worked in preschool through high school education since 1981. She is an English teacher at Chicago's Whitney Young High School.

70s

Dorothy J. Harrell (BS71) spent her career in education, teaching for 20 years before graduating from the University of Wisconsin Law School. She spent the next 20 working for the world's largest union, the National Education Association, from which she retired as director of constituent relations.

After 55 years of teaching people to cook, tend bar, wait tables, and provide hospitality, **Dave Conant** (BS72) has retired to St. Louis. "The value of my time at Northwestern is inestimable," he says. "What I learned more than anything else was to question things I didn't understand, respect people who could express opinions different from mine, and learn from the people I was working with."

Cheryl Thomas Strickland (BS77) is principal and senior managing director for Citihomes Consulting, a firm working in social-impact investment and fund management, community redevelopment, and affordable housing.

Patricia Jones Blessman (BS78) is a retired licensed clinical psychologist who worked for more than three decades as a clinician, consultant, and administrator of mental health programs. An active philanthropist, she is also a member of the Social Venture Network and a sustaining member of the Environmental Law and Policy Center.

80s

Elizabeth Oppen Eshoo (BS85) of San Diego was selected by the Epilepsy Foundation of America as an advocacy champion for the 2026 Public Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. She has been a vocal advocate for the San Diego chapter for more than 14 years and was recently named to its board of directors.

90s

Julie Flapan (MS95) is a researcher and director of the Computer Science Equity Project at Center X in the School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She was recently awarded a Fulbright Specialist Program award as a visiting scholar at Mahidol University in Bangkok.

00s

Trey Morgan (BS00) joined the Fuqua School of Business board of visitors at Duke University, where he earned his MBA.

Amy Gale (BS05) is chief executive officer of the Menorah Heritage Foundation.

Andrew Krantz (BS08) is president of IMA Financial Group.

10s

Luke Dauch (BS15, Kellogg MBA16) is a principal on the business development team for Transom Capital Group, an operations-focused private equity firm.



Young and **Curie Lee** (fourth and fifth from left) have sent more children to SESP than any other family. Of their six children, five are SESP grads. Here's where the family stands today.

From left to right, at Josephine's wedding:

Curie (BS12) is a national and international education policy adviser at the University of Cologne and lectures at the Humboldt University of Berlin.

Moses (BS20) leads regulatory and monetized product policy at Google. He previously worked on child safety policy at YouTube and was an intelligence analyst for the FBI.

Mary, who graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, lives in Greensboro, North Carolina, with her husband and daughter.

Josephine (BS14), pictured with husband Andrew Palmer, is a sales director at Sierra, which helps businesses build more-human customer experiences with AI.

Sarah (BS17, PhD26) recently completed her doctorate in learning sciences.

Joanne (BS22) is a compliance trainer at Interactive Brokers.

Marriage brought two more Wildcats into the fold (not pictured): **Jonathan Ng** (WCAS PhD21), who married Sarah in 2024, and **Isaac Jang** (McCormick16, Kellogg MS17, MBA26), who wed Joanne in 2025.

Lya Ferreyra (BS16) is an attorney with the Immigrant Defenders Law Center in Los Angeles.

Bridget O'Connell (MS17) is associate dean of engineering at City Colleges of Chicago.

Sienna Parker (BS18) earned a doctorate in technology management from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and is headed to the Judge Business School at the University of Cambridge as a tenure-track assistant professor in organization theory and information systems.

Catherine Ettinger (BS19) is a volunteer coordinator at RefugeeOne. A Fulbright Scholar and AmeriCorps alumna, she's passionate about welcoming refugees, building the capacity of antipoverty nonprofits, and equipping volunteers to serve their communities.

20s

Emily Velazquez (BS20) was named teacher of the year at Chicago's Victoria Soto High, where she teaches English in the Acero Schools network. Velazquez, who also has master's degrees in education and principal leadership as well as an ESL endorsement, says her teaching philosophy is "rooted in the gentle reminder that I teach students, not reading and writing."

Sugat Dabholkar (PhD22) is an assistant professor in the department of science education at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Pune, India.

Tamara Kissoon (BS22) is pursuing a law degree at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, where she is editor in chief of the *Northwestern Journal of Human Rights*.

Ezra Sergent-Leventhal (MS23) was elected legislative chair of the Truman chapter of the Cook County College Teachers Union.

Julia Honoroff (PhD25) is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. She's working on a rental assistance project spearheaded by the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation and the City of Philadelphia in collaboration with the university.

Christopher Kaufman (MS25) was appointed to the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents.

Jacob Kelter (PhD25) is executive director of the new NetLogo Center at SESP, created to ensure popular scientific-modeling software developed by SESP professor Uri Wilensky remains free and accessible for all (see page 5).

Jack Lausch (BS25) was selected by the Cincinnati Reds in the 17th round of the 2026 Major League Baseball draft. Lausch, who played both baseball and football for the Wildcats, received the 2025–26 Big Ten Outstanding Sportsmanship Award and the Paul Stevens Life Teammate Award.

Anusha Kumar (BS26) received a US Student Fulbright Award to teach English in Linz, Austria. Fluent in English, German, and Tamil, Kumar decided to apply for the program after working as a tutor for Northwestern's Books & Breakfast program.

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